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HARVARD PRESIDENT DEREK BOK

CIA CHIEF STANSFIELD TURNER

CIA IN ACADEME

What is the proper role for the Central Intelligence Agency in American universities?

Last summer Derek Bok, president of Harvard, complained to a U.S. Senate committee that the covert recruiting policies of the CIA threatened "the integrity and independence of the academic community."

Bok said Harvard was willing to permit the open recruiting of personnel on campus. But it did not cotton to the CIA practice of covertly using faculty members, athletic coaches, administrators and others to recruit students--particularly foreign students --for the agency's own purposes.

Stansfield Turner, the CIA director appointed by Jimmy Carter, says he has no intentions of complying with Harvard's ban on the recruiting of foreign students.

"If we were required to abide by the rules of every corporation, every academic institution, it would become impossible to do the required job for our country," Turner explained to a group of TV interviewers. "Harvard does not have any legal authority over us. I think it's very dangerous for our country when a particular segment of our society--in this case, the intelligence community--is singled out for discriminatory action."

The trouble with the covert intervention of the CIA in the life of a university is that it breeds distrust and suspicion. Unfortunately, the CIA suffers from a tarnished history of rank dishonor, inept leadership and consistent violation of the law. It should not be permitted to insinuate itself into the academic community without Congressional guidelines.